

THE MYTH, THE TRUTH, THE NASA IRB

M. D. Covington¹, M. P. Flores², V. P. Neutzler², T. T. Schlegel³, S. H. Platts³, and C.W. Lloyd³

¹MEI Technologies, 18050 Saturn Lane, Suite 300, Houston, TX 77058- marisa.d.covington@nasa.gov, ²KBRwyle, 2400 E. NASA Parkway, Houston, TX 77058- mflores@wylehou.com and vanessa.neutzler@nasa.gov, and ³2101 NASA Parkway, Houston, TX 77058- todd.t.schlegel@nasa.gov, steven.platts-1@nasa.gov, and charles.w.lloyd@nasa.gov

The purpose of the NASA Institutional Review Board (IRB) is to review research activities involving human subjects to ensure that ethical standards for the care and protection of human subjects have been met and research activities are in compliance with all pertinent federal, state and local regulations as well as NASA policies. NASA IRB's primary role is the protection of human subjects in research studies. Protection of human subjects is the shared responsibility of NASA, the IRB, and the scientific investigators. Science investigators who plan to conduct NASA-funded human research involving NASA investigators, facilities, or funds must submit and coordinate their research studies for review and approval by the NASA IRB prior to initiation. The IRB has the authority to approve, require changes in, or disapprove research involving human subjects. Better knowledge of the NASA IRB policies, procedures and guidelines should help facilitate research protocol applications and approvals.

In this presentation, the myths and truths of NASA IRB policies and procedures will be discussed. We will focus on the policies that guide a protocol through the NASA IRB and the procedures that principal investigators must take to obtain required IRB approvals for their research studies. In addition, tips to help ensure a more efficient IRB review will be provided. By understanding the requirements and processes, investigators will be able to more efficiently prepare their protocols and obtain the required NASA IRB approval in a timely manner.